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Strawberry supplies are expected to be very small until after the turn of the year due to freeze damage in Florida. First strawberries generally come from Florida which is practically the sole source of supply until mid-March. Shipments commence in December but do not become heavy until March. The recent freeze is expected to reduce Florida supplies and to retard marketings. Acreage planted to strawberries in Florida is about average but one-sixth less than a year ago.

Potato, sweetpotato and onion supplies during winter months come primarily from storage holdings of the late crop. Due to relatively large production, potato and sweetpotato prices are expected to make less than their usual rise during the next few months and to remain lower than a year ago. Onion prices most likely will advance seasonally and continue higher than a year ago.

Butter prices appear to have reached their season's peak and a more than usual price decline is in prospect until the yearly low point is reached in June. Substantial price changes are not expected until after the turn of the year. Prices during the early winter probably will be the highest since 1930. However, the average price for the first half of 1938 is not expected to differ much from that in the first half of 1937. Cold storage holdings of butter on December 1 were about one-fourth less than a year ago.

Apple prices probably will advance less than usual until the new crop is available next summer. Supplies during this period come from cold and common storage. Cold storage holdings on December 1 were the largest on record, with most of the increase in eastern apples.

Egg prices are expected to continue moving down until they reach their low point in April or May. Temporary price increases, however, often occur during the winter. Extremely low temperatures not only check production increases but also block deliveries. Recent wide spread between top and average grade egg prices has narrowed considerably but price reduction from a year ago still is most marked in average grade eggs. Supplies of storage eggs are still considerably larger than a year ago, December 1 holdings being over 50% above last year.

# CONSUMERS MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D.C.

Volume II, No. 4

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☆ JAN 8 1938 ☆

U. S. Department of Agriculture

January 1, 1938

Supplies of most foods this year are expected to be larger than in 1937 and prices of most items probably will be below their 1937 level. Larger supplies of pork, better grade beef, rice, dried beans, walnuts, almonds, pecans, sweetpotatoes, oranges, lemons, and canned vegetables are in prospect. Egg supplies probably will be smaller. Poultry marketings are expected to be below their 1937 level only during the first half of the year. Fresh vegetable production most likely will be about the same as in 1937 with increases in intermediate and late producing States offsetting decreases in early producing areas. Larger apple supplies but smaller grapefruit supplies are expected during the first half of the year.

Pref, butter, egg, and citrus fruit prices usually decline seasonally in January. The trend in apple, potato, onion and sweetpotato prices, however, generally is upward.

Beef prices probably will continue moving down during the first half of 1938. Quality of beef should improve as animals fed on grain for longer periods of time move to market. Short-fed cattle--those fed on grain from 60 to 120 days--comprise bulk of present supplies. While both retail and live animal prices have dropped considerably since hitting their high point in late September, the sharpest decline has occurred in live animal prices. Largest increase in live-to-retail price margin has been in choice beef. Recent price declines have canceled a substantial part of the marked summer and fall advance and in mid-December retail prices of good grade beef at New York were about 20 percent below their September peak.

Pork prices this year are expected to be below their 1937 level. Most of the increase over 1937 in slaughter is expected during the last half of the year. Hog prices probably will advance during the first quarter of 1938 as slaughter decreases seasonally. Fresh pork prices most likely will move up but prices of cured items probably will continue downward.

Lamb prices may not make their usual rise from January through April. Total supplies during this period probably will

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be about the same as in 1937, but will include a larger proportion of grain-fed lambs. Lamb slaughter in 1938 is expected to be about the same as in the year just ended, but prices most likely will be below their 1937 level.

Record orange supplies are in prospect for the 1937-1938 season. Production is expected to be about one-fifth larger than a year ago, with most of the increase in California Valencia or summer oranges. The latter crop, which moves to market from May through October, is indicated to be slightly over 50 percent larger than the 1936 freeze-damaged crop. Orange prices from January to October probably will be lower than a year ago with the sharpest decreases from 1937 during the summer months.

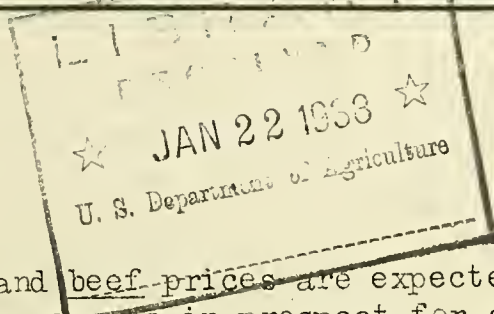
Florida orange prices ordinarily reach their seasonal low point in December and remain close to this level until the seasonal upswing commences in February. Low point in California Navel prices generally comes in January and February and the seasonal advance gets under way by April. California Valencias usually are cheapest in May and then move up until their October high point.

Lemon production is expected to be the second largest on record but only about one-twentieth bigger than a year ago. Lemon prices hit their lowest level from February through April and reach their peak in the hot summer months. California supplies most of the lemons consumed in the United States.

# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division  
Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

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Volume II, No. 5.



January 17, 1938.

Egg, butter and beef prices are expected to decline seasonally this month. Advances are in prospect for cabbage and sweetpotatoes. Potato and apple prices probably will show little change from present relatively low levels.

Vegetable prices generally advance during winter months. String bean prices usually hit their peak in January and then move down through July. High point in spinach and carrot prices comes in February, with low points, respectively, in June and August. Onion and cabbage prices move up continually until May, while highest celery and potato prices are reached in June. Prices of these four vegetables then start moving down until they hit bottom in October and November.

Retail orange prices usually hit their low point during January and February. Current supplies are the largest on record. Best quality oranges are firm and heavy and have a fine textured skin. Puffy oranges are likely to be light in weight and lacking in juice. Surface blemishes such as scars, scratches and slight discolorations do not affect quality.

Artichoke supplies increase during the early months of the year, with peak shipments in March and April. Most desirable artichokes are compact and heavy, yield but slightly to pressure and have large tightly clinging fleshy leaf scales of a good green color. Green color indicates freshness, for 'chokes turn brownish from age or injury. Size does not affect quality or flavor. Open or spreading artichokes with hard scale tips and fuzzy centers generally have a strong flavor and tough and woody scales.

First carlot strawberry shipments are expected late this month. The early berry season is starting later than usual due to freezing weather in December. Florida is the sole source of supply until March, and production in this area is about a tenth less than a year ago, but about average. Heaviest Florida shipments come in early March and peak movement from all areas is reached in May. Quality berries are solid red, free from moisture and have their green cap attached. Size is no

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indication of flavor, which varies with variety. Overripe berries have a dull appearance, and are wet and leaky. Careful consumers check berries at the bottom of the basket.

Spinach and cabbage from the 1938 crop are now moving to market, and marked increases in supplies are expected in January and February. About one-fourth of commercial cabbage production and slightly over half of annual commercial spinach supplies come from the early producing states which ship from December through April. Texas is the major producing state in the group. Production of early spinach is slightly smaller than a year ago, but the early cabbage crop is about the same. Best spinach has fresh, crisp, clean leaves of good green color. Early cabbage is not as solid or firm as cabbage from the late crop, but heads should be reasonably firm and heavy for their size. Both types are now being sold and the early variety can be identified by its deep green leaves and relatively loose heads. Freshness of appearance is a more important indication of quality in early cabbage than in late varieties.

Broccoli shipments are heaviest in March, but supplies usually are large during the first third of the year. Tenderness is an important quality factor because the whole stalk consisting of stem, leaves, and flower cluster is used. Best broccoli is either darkish green or purplish green depending upon variety. Overmature broccoli, which is tough or stringy, is indicated by bud clusters which are open enough to show the full yellow or purple color of the blossom.

Average retail white bread prices for the U. S. have remained unchanged since June despite a downswing in bread ingredient prices. During the last part of 1937, the gross margin between retail bread prices and the cost of the ingredients in a typical pound loaf of bread was at its highest level in 7 years.

Butter prices are expected to decline more than seasonally from December through June. Prices also probably will average less than a year ago.

Decline in prices of better grade beef cattle during the first half of 1938 may be smaller than previously expected due to the sharp price readjustment which occurred in November and December. Retail prices are considerably below their peak reached this fall, but are expected to continue moving down during the first half of the year.

# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

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Volume II, No. 6

★ FEB 5 1938 ★  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

February 1, 1938.

Lower butter, egg, and beef prices but higher prices for cabbage, onions, and sweetpotatoes are in prospect for February. Poultry and lamb prices also may move up slightly. No material change is anticipated in apple, orange, grapefruit, and potato prices.

More apples and oranges than a year ago, but less grapefruit are in prospect for the remainder of the current marketing season. During the first half of the year apples come from cold and common storage. Record size cold storage holdings on January 1, were two-fifths bigger than a year ago. No records of common storage holdings are available, but trade reports indicate larger stocks. Orange supplies for the remainder of the winter and spring are expected to be about a third larger than a year ago. Remaining grapefruit supplies may be about a tenth below 1937 but larger than in previous periods. Apple and orange prices probably will continue lower than a year ago. Grapefruit prices most likely will be about the same or slightly higher than in 1937. Due to large supplies, apple and orange prices probably will register less than their usual rise during the first half of the year.

Tangerine shipments continue through April, but February usually marks the last month of heavy marketings. Prices are expected to continue slightly higher than a year ago.

Larger crops of most early vegetables than a year ago are expected. Marked increases are reported for snap beans, beets, and celery. Cabbage and carrot production are expected to be close to their 1937 level. During February, marketings of snap beans, new cabbage, and green peas usually increase seasonally.

Cabbage prices probably will continue moving up during February and remain higher than a year ago. Supplies at present consist of old crop cabbage from northern storage holdings and new cabbage from southern States. Storage holdings on January 1, were about 40 percent less than a year ago. Shipments of early cabbage through late January were about a third less than in 1937 due to a late season in Texas, the principal early cabbage producing State.

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Small quantities of new potatoes from Florida and Texas are now moving to market. However, old potatoes from storage holdings in northern States comprise bulk of potato supplies until May. Potato supplies during the first half of 1938 probably will be above their 1937 level. Storage holdings of old potatoes on January 1, were around one-fourth larger than a year ago, but about average size. Because of larger supplies potato prices have been lower than last season, and have shown little change since October. Prices probably will continue below their 1937 level during the first half of the year with little change expected during February.

First asparagus of the season is expected this month. Opening prices are relatively high. Prices then move down sharply as supplies increase and reach their low in April. Acreage planted to early asparagus is slightly larger than a year ago. Bulk of early production comes from California. White asparagus has a milder flavor than green asparagus and is used mainly for canning. Green asparagus is more popular, and should be green for almost its entire length. Quality asparagus is tender and firm with close, compact tips.

Strawberry shipments are expected to increase during February. Shipments to date have been considerably less than a year ago because of freeze damage in Florida. Peak movement of strawberries comes in May.

Shallot production is expected to be about one-fifth larger than in 1937. Peak movement of these small onions occurs in late February. Immature shallots are eaten as green onions, while the dried matured plants are used for flavoring purposes.

Outlook for lamb supplies from January through April has been revised upward due to a larger than expected increase in the number of lambs on feed on January 1. Slaughter now is expected to be larger than a year ago with a decrease in grass-fat lamb marketings offsetting only a part of the sharp increase over 1937 in grain-fed lamb slaughter. The seasonal increase in lamb prices during this 4-month period probably will be smaller than usual and prices are expected to average considerably under a year ago.

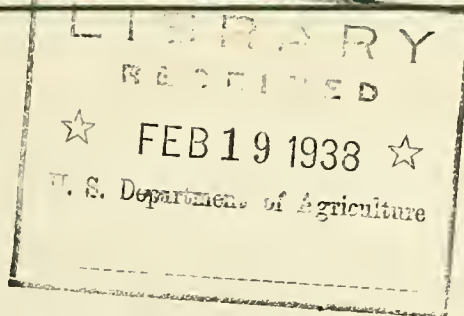


# CONSUMERS MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 7



February 15, 1938.

The Florida strawberry season swings fully under way in February. Florida is the sole source of berries until the last half of March when shipments commence from Louisiana, the largest berry-producing State. Supplies are expected to trend upward until May when the seasonal low point in prices usually is reached. Florida shipments have increased sharply since the season commenced in late January and this has caused a marked reduction in prices. The Florida crop is expected to be about a twelfth smaller than a year ago, but the effect of reduced supplies may be offset by a shipping season one month shorter than usual.

Florida celery shipments have increased sharply recently due to record production. A crop about one-eighth larger than a year ago is in prospect. Florida produces about one-fifth of annual celery supplies. Peak movement from this area generally occurs in April. With grower prices this year far below a year ago, marketings are subject to regulations under an A.A.A. agreement.

Course of food costs in general probably will continue downward through March with the rate of change influenced by business conditions. From September through mid-January, retail food costs in the United States dropped 6 1/2 percent, to their lowest level since early 1936. Sharp reductions in meat prices have been the major factor behind this downswing.

Beef, egg, and butter prices are expected to continue moving down, and to remain under a year ago. The declines may not be as large as recent changes. Apple, orange, poultry, potato, and lamb prices probably won't change much even though these items usually advance at this period of the year. Poultry most likely will be the only item in the group retailing above a year ago. Seasonal advances are in prospect for onions and cabbage until substantial supplies from the early crops grown this year are available in April or May.

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Decline in better grade beef prices during the next few months probably will be smaller than anticipated in view of the sharp declines which have occurred already. During the first week in February choice and prime cattle were selling at less than half their peak price last October. This sharp decline has narrowed the margin between prices of top and average grade beef. In early February this margin was considerably below average compared with the record size margin last fall. Seasonal increases in better grade cattle supplies still are expected during the spring and summer months.

Lamb price outlook has shifted again and it now appears that prices won't advance much during the next few months, and that retail prices might ease off a little more. From December through April lamb prices usually move up, but this year they have been going down. Supplies of grain-fed lamb are expected to be considerably larger than a year ago.

Hog prices are expected to move up during the next few months in view of prospective seasonal reductions in slaughter. This advance most likely will check temporarily the downswing in fresh pork prices. Prices of smoked products probably will continue downward due to the usual time lag between changes in price of live hogs and smoked meats.

Frozen and fresh dressed poultry supplies during the first half of 1938 are expected to be less than a year ago. Prices probably will continue above their last year's level, but the advance until June may be relatively small.

Additional declines in egg prices are expected until the seasonal low point is reached in April or May. Production has been much heavier than anticipated with mild weather and liberal feed supplies offsetting the effect of sharply reduced farm flocks. Prices probably will continue under 1937 until mid-spring at which time they are expected to move above their level a year ago.

Butter prices have dropped sharply since reaching their peak last December and a more than usual price decline is in prospect until the seasonal low point is reached in June. Production during this period is expected to be considerably larger than in 1937, with prices under a year ago.

Orange prices appear to be at or close to their low point for the season. Retail orange prices in mid-January were the lowest since mid-March 1933. Supplies are expected to continue above their 1937 level.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 8

MAR 5 1938 ★

March 1, 1938

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Seasonal increases in marketings of most vegetables are in prospect. From now until the summer months is the season most vegetable prices shade off. Cabbage, onion, celery, potatoes, and sweetpotatoes are exceptions to this downward price trend during the first half of the year. Major crops of these vegetables are harvested in the fall, and lowest prices come in October. A smaller than seasonal price increase is expected in potatoes and celery this year, while a larger than usual advance may occur in onions and cabbage.

Marketings of Florida strawberries have declined temporarily due to weather conditions. First Louisiana berries are expected early this month and shipments from this area probably will be well under way by the last week of March. Florida is the sole source of strawberry marketings until Louisiana starts shipping.

Broccoli and artichoke marketings hit their season's high point in March. California is the sole source of artichoke shipments while broccoli moves from the southeastern states and California.

More tomatoes at lower prices are in prospect this month. Bulk of March and April marketings come from Florida. The spring crop in south Florida, where about half the Florida crop is produced, is slightly larger than last year, and considerably above average. Peak shipments from this section are expected early this month. Tomatoes shipped long distances are picked when green but mature, and are ripened at consuming centers. They are less juicy than the vine-ripened tomatoes which are marketed in late spring and summer months. Good quality tomatoes are firm, smooth, have a good color and are free from blemishes. Puffy or watery fruit generally is of poor flavor and wasty.

Asparagus marketings may be delayed somewhat by flood damage to fields in California, where the bulk of the early crop is

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grown. The season generally runs from February through July with heaviest marketings in April. First shipments come by express, and opening prices are relatively high. Prices drop sharply as carlot movement gets under way. First carlot shipments this year are expected around the 10th of the month.

First Puerto Rico pineapples arrived at markets in late February. Peak movement of fresh pineapples comes in June.

Apples and oranges continue to sell at prices sharply below their level a year ago. The large increase in supplies over last year probably will result in a smaller than usual price advance during the remainder of the marketing season. Apple and orange growers are undertaking extensive advertising campaigns in order to speed up sales.

New potato marketings are expected to increase this month and prices probably will remain lower than a year ago. Quality of the crop is reported to be unusually good. Present new potato shipments are coming from Florida and Texas.

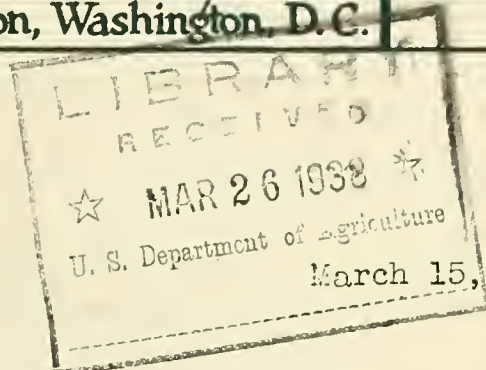
Consumers interested in purchasing quality fruits and vegetables will find considerable useful information in Miscellaneous Publication 167 - "A Fruit and Vegetable Buying Guide for Consumers." For copies write the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., enclosing 5 cents.

# CONSUMERS MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D.C.

Volume II, No. 9



First carlot shipments of California asparagus reached markets early this month. California produces about a fifth of annual supplies and the bulk of the early crop. Acreage in California is slightly larger than in 1937. Heaviest movement and lowest prices of California asparagus usually come in April. However, asparagus season extends through July and lowest prices in cities located near late producing areas come in May or June. White asparagus is slightly milder in flavor than green asparagus. The former is cut when the growing spear breaks through the surface whereas the green kind is cut after the stalk is about 6 or 7 inches above ground. Asparagus ages rapidly after being cut. Fresh and tender stalks are brittle and have close compact tips.

Louisiana strawberries are beginning to move to market, and volume shipments from this area are expected to commence the last week of the month. About one-fifth of the annual commercial berry production comes from the early producing States, with the Louisiana crop more than half of the early total. The early crop matures primarily in March and April and is expected to be about a sixth larger than last year. Growers in Louisiana plan to ship only berries grading U. S. No. 1. Production estimates for States shipping in May and June are not yet available but supplies may be larger than in 1937 in view of a larger acreage. Seasonal low point in strawberry prices usually comes in early May.

Retail meat prices appear to be at or close to their low point for the first half of 1938. Meat prices in general have dropped about 20 percent since last fall, and have returned to late 1934 and early 1935 levels. During the 6 months ending in mid-February, prices of beefsteaks and fresh pork tumbled 14 cents a pound, about double the drop in smoked pork products and beef roasts, and almost three times the decline in lamb.

Fresh pork prices probably will advance slightly through April, and then decline slightly. A larger price upswing is in prospect for lamb. Lamb prices generally are highest from May to July,

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when supplies are seasonally small and consist mostly of spring lambs. Beef prices may ease off a little more, but any drop most likely will be small compared with the sharp changes since October.

First spring lambs from the 1938 crop are expected to reach market in late April. These early lambs are fattened mainly on mother's milk and are slaughtered when from 3 to 5 months of age. The crop is expected to be about one-sixth larger than last year's small crop and marketings prior to July 1 probably will be larger than a year ago and better in quality. Grain-fed lambs comprise the bulk of present marketings, and supplies are expected to continue larger than at this time in 1937.

Hog slaughter during the remainder of the marketing year which ends September 30 probably will be larger than a year ago with most of the increase over 1937 coming after April. Seasonal decreases in slaughter are in prospect until fall pigs are marketed in volume in late April or early May.

Butter production is expected to continue higher than a year ago and prices probably will continue under their 1937 level. Due to favorable weather conditions and cheap feed supplies milk production increased more than usual during February and on March 1 was the highest for that date since 1933. The wholesale price of 32 score butter at New York has remained at 30½ cents a pound since the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation commenced purchasing butter for relief distribution in mid-February. Butter prices usually decline during the first half of the year and hit bottom in June.

Egg prices appear to be at or close to their low point for the year. Despite record low numbers of layers in farm flocks, production has continued above a year ago because of heavy production per hen. Egg prices generally reach their seasonal low point in April but the sharp declines in recent months appear to have brought the low point earlier than usual.

Orange and apple prices probably will continue lower than a year ago, and register less than their usual price advance during the first half of the year. Apple supplies during this period come from storage stocks. Cold storage holdings on March 1 were the largest on record for this date, and almost two-thirds above 1937. Current orange supplies consist of California Navels and Florida oranges. Supplies in both areas are indicated to be materially bigger than a year ago. In mid-February orange prices hit a new record low. U. S. average retail price of 24 cents a dozen, and were almost half their peak level last August.

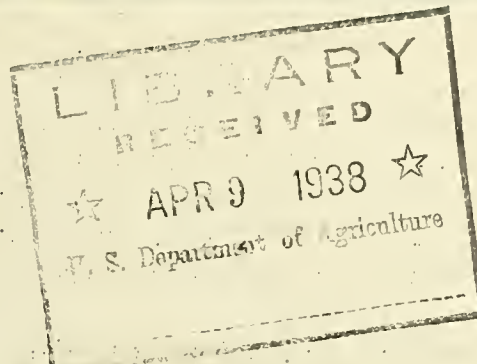


# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 10



April 1, 1938.

Asparagus and strawberries head the fruit and vegetable parade during April. Prices of most fresh vegetables generally move down during the month and Bermuda onions make their first appearance at markets. Flow of new potatoes usually increases and first cantaloupes and cherries of the season come to market. Supplies of grapefruit and oranges ordinarily are close to their peak levels of the year, and apple marketings also are relatively large. Big supplies of apples and oranges point to a continuation of bargain prices during April.

Meat prices in general probably will change only slightly during the first half of April, and are expected to continue under their 1937 level. Lamb and pork prices ordinarily advance in April as supplies decline seasonally. A smaller than usual advance is in prospect for pork this year and little change may occur in lamb. Better grade beef prices generally decline during April, but prices probably will remain close to present levels. Most of the winter and spring decline in better grade cattle prices appears to have occurred from October to January when prices dropped about 50 percent. Recent spread between better and medium grade beef prices has been relatively narrow.

Egg prices appear to be close to their low point for the year. Some further temporary declines may occur during the spring months, but the price trend probably will be upward until peak prices are reached in November. No material change in egg prices is expected during the first half of April. Further price declines are in prospect for butter, with lowest prices generally reached in June. Production of both butter and eggs has been larger than a year ago. While butter production probably will continue higher than a year ago during the spring and summer, egg production is expected to drop below its 1937 level in the spring.

Marked increases in asparagus marketings are in prospect during April. Rainy weather in California, the major early producing State, has delayed movement of the crop, and has caused decay in early shipments. Marketings from Georgia and South Carolina, the two other early produc-

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ing States, have been speeded up to fill the gap left by delayed California shipments.

Strawberry shipments are expected to trend upward until peak movement occurs in early May. Louisiana furnishes the bulk of April strawberries and a crop much larger than a year ago is in prospect. Quality in berries is indicated by general appearance. Size is no index to flavor, for flavor varies with the variety. Quality berries have a bright appearance, are full solid red, free from moisture and have the cap attached. Strawberries without caps should be carefully examined because they may be overmature. Presence of overripe or damaged strawberries is indicated often by a stained container. Thrifty consumers check the berries at the bottom of the basket.

Stocks of principal canned vegetables on March 1 were substantially larger than a year ago and it appears that acreage planted to vegetables for 1938 canning probably will be less than a year ago. The 1937 pack of canned vegetables was the largest on record. Canned corn holdings on March 1 were triple a year ago, while green pea and tomato stocks, respectively, were double and 50 percent above 1937. No March 1 report for snap beans is available, but January 1 holdings were 90 percent above 1937. Compared with March 1937, wholesale prices of standard canned green peas and snap beans were down about a fourth, corn was around a fifth lower, and tomatoes were unchanged.

Old crop potatoes still comprise the bulk of potato supplies despite increasing shipments of new potatoes from Florida and Texas. Most of the remaining old potato stocks probably will be marketed this month, and it appears that new potatoes will be the major source of supply in May. Production of new potatoes is expected to be slightly less than a year ago. During this period of the year old potato prices usually advance as supplies decrease, while new potato prices trend downward.

Spring lettuce supplies probably will be materially larger than in 1937, with volume shipments from California expected in mid-April. The early lettuce season in Arizona appears to have passed its peak. If Arizona shipments fall off sharply before the spring lettuce movement gets underway, prices most likely will advance temporarily. Good quality head lettuce is crisp and fairly firm to hard.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 11

APR 23 1938

April 15, 1938

Spring vegetable crops are maturing several weeks earlier than usual in all sections except the Pacific Coast. The following production changes from a year ago are expected: Much larger production of lima beans, cabbage, and carrots; slight increase, Bermuda onions; minor decrease, beets and spinach; sharp decrease, green peas; new potatoes from the earliest producing States, which grow about a fifth of the commercial new potato crop, and snap beans about the same. Vegetable marketings usually increase during the spring and summer and prices trend downward until they hit bottom in the summer.

Season for cantaloups, cherries, and broilers opens during the last half of April. Supplies of these products are relatively light during this period, but increase sharply in May.

Asparagus shipments from California are expected to increase sharply and hit their peak during the latter part of this month. Wet weather has delayed harvesting and total shipments from this area, which furnishes the bulk of the early crop, may be less than a year ago.

More strawberries than a year ago are expected from States shipping in April and May. The crop is maturing early this year due to favorable weather conditions and peak shipments may come early in May. States shipping mainly in April and May produce about one-half of annual strawberry supplies. The Louisiana Farmers' Protective Union, which controls distribution of the crop in Louisiana, the major strawberry-producing State, has refused to sell berries to buyers who retail them at less than 1 1/2 cents a pint above cost.

Apple and orange producers are cooperating with retail grocers in special sales in order to move the big supplies of both fruits remaining to be marketed. Retail orange prices in mid-March were close to the lowest on record, and a third below last year. Retail apple prices have shown practically no change since hitting bottom last October and also were a third under 1937.

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Egg prices are cheapest in March and April. Prices then move up, but sharpest upswing commences in June. Eggs have been retailing at relatively low prices and during the first quarter of 1938 were the lowest for this period since 1934. Egg production has been heavier than a year ago, but probably will drop below its 1937 level in the summer and fall.

Spring peak in hog prices appears to have been reached and prices probably will move down through June. Total pork supplies during the remainder of the marketing season, which ends September 30, may not be much different from 1937, but prices probably will be lower. Smaller storage stocks most likely will offset a considerable part of the sharp increase in slaughter that is expected.

Spring lamb marketings are increasing and slaughter prior to July 1 most likely will be bigger than in 1937. Spring lamb prices probably will be much lower than last year.

Broilers are the first young chickens which are marketed during the spring. They consist mainly of young cockrels and weigh from 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 pounds. Early chicken hatchings have been larger than a year ago and broiler marketings probably will be larger this year.

Butter production most likely will continue higher than last year during the spring and summer. Seasonal low point in butter prices usually comes in June.

Prices of lard, cottonseed oil, and other fats and oils probably will continue lower than a year ago primarily due to larger supplies. In mid-March the average retail cost of fats and oils was about an eighth under last year.

Average retail price of white bread has not changed since last June. The current price is the highest since 1929. During the same period the retail price of flour has dropped about three-quarters of a cent per pound to the lowest level since mid-1933. The price of soda crackers has gone down about 1 1/2 cents a pound since last June but the price of pound cake has shown no net change during this period.

# CONSUMERS MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 12

★ MAY 7 1938 ★

U. S. Department of Agriculture

May 2, 1938

May is strawberry month. The parade of berries to market reaches its peak as supplies flow in from practically every strawberry producing State during some period of the month. North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee are the major sources of supply during the first half of May. Berry prices usually hit bottom in late May. Unless the freeze damage of early April proves serious, strawberries are expected to be more plentiful than a year ago. Strawberry season ends in early July.

Fruit and melon season of 1938 opens in May as cherries, peaches, plums, watermelons, honeydew and honeyball melons, and cantaloups begin to move to market. Fruit prices, however, usually are relatively high until volume shipments commence in June. Seasons for the above items, and months of peak movement are as follows:

Cherries - May to July.....	June peak
Peaches - May to September.....	July "
Plums - May to October.....	Sept. "
Cantaloups - April to October.....	Aug. "
Watermelons - May to September.....	July "
Honeydew & Honeyball melons - May to November.....	July "

Onion, rhubarb, and pineapple shipments hit their season's peak in May. Lowest onion prices, however, do not come until October when the harvest of the late crop is at its height. Texas is the principal source of May onion supplies. The current Bermuda or new onion crop in this State is about the same as last year.

Marked increases in new potato marketings are in prospect this month. This increase probably will more than offset the sharp reduction in old potato shipments which usually occurs as the old potato season nears its finish. New potato prices are expected to make their usual decline from now to mid-summer, and old potato prices probably won't change much from present levels. The 1938 crop of new potatoes most likely will be smaller than last year, but prices probably will continue under their 1937 level.

More lettuce at sharply reduced prices is in prospect for May. Heads, also, are expected to be larger, and quality much better. Recent high prices were due to the late development of the California crop coupled with an early windup of the Arizona season which resulted in a period of limited supplies. Lettuce marketings usually increase

(Over)



materially in May and hit their season's peak in June and July. The California crop, which is the principal source of supply during the remainder of the spring, is about a fifth larger than a year ago. Growers in this area plan to eliminate marketings of the lower grades of small heads of lettuce if the volume of shipments at any time depresses prices unduly.

Cucumber production in States shipping primarily in May probably will be a third less than a year ago. While the Florida crop will be larger than in 1937, the Texas crop was almost completely destroyed by a cold wave.

Plentiful tomato supplies are in prospect this month. Florida and Texas are the principal sources of supply in May. The Florida crop is more than double a year ago, while total production in the May shipping States is expected to be about 50 percent bigger than last year.

Asparagus season shifts eastward in May with supplies moving from Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. The California shipping season is expected to end in early May.

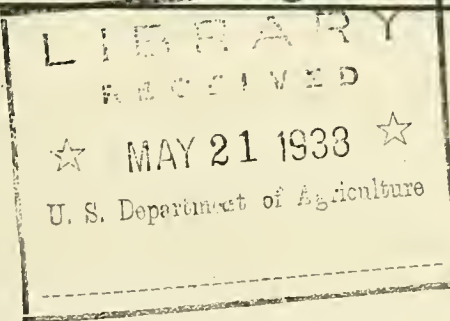
Acreage planted to vegetables for canning probably will be much smaller than in 1937. Sharpest decreases are expected in sweet corn and tomatoes with a minor decrease in green peas. Snap bean acreage, however, probably will be slightly larger. Stocks of canned vegetables on April 1 were considerably larger than a year ago with major increases in corn and snap beans.



# CONSUMERS MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.



Volume II, No. 13

May 16, 1938.

Total supply of commercial truck crops available for shipment in May is expected to be slightly larger than in 1937, and considerably above average. Crops are maturing about two weeks earlier than usual. Increases over a year ago are reported for asparagus, snap-beans, cabbage, carrots, eggplant, strawberries, tomatoes, and water-melons. Decreases are in prospect for cantaloups, celery, cucumbers, green peas, and spinach. Very little change from 1937 is expected for new potatoes, onions, and green peppers.

Strawberry prices usually are lowest in late May or early June when supplies are heaviest and move to market mainly by truck. Production in the States shipping during the remainder of May and in June is expected to be considerably larger than a year ago. The Louisiana season is about over and Tennessee, Virginia, and Kentucky will be shipping in volume during the latter part of the month.

First Georgia peaches moved to market in early May and supplies from this area probably will increase until they hit their peak in July. Georgia is practically the sole source of peaches until July. The southern States produce most of the fresh peach varieties while bulk of peaches for canning and drying are grown in California. Production in the 10 southern States is expected to be about a third larger than a year ago and prices probably will be considerably under last year's high level. Production in California may be smaller than in 1937.

New potato crop is maturing earlier than usual and shipments have been heavier than at this time in 1937. Prices usually move down until early June. Production in States shipping primarily in May is about the same as last year, and prices most likely will continue under their 1937 level. Remaining stocks of old potatoes probably will be used up by the end of this month.

Earliest maturing watermelons are grown in Florida and California and are marketed in May and June. Florida melons are moving to market

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but first California shipments are not due until the last week in May. Production in these two States probably will be a tenth bigger than in 1937. Georgia is the leading melon producing State and first shipments from this area are expected about June 10. Melon shipments usually are heaviest in July.

May and June cantaloups come primarily from California, where a crop one-fourth smaller than a year ago is in prospect. Shipments to date have been relatively light and melons have been small. Larger melons and heavier shipments are expected in late May and early June. California shipments are heaviest in June but lowest cantaloup prices usually come in August.

Egg production has dropped below its 1937 level for the first time this year and probably will continue under 1937 during the remainder of 1938. Low point in prices appears to have been passed and increases are in prospect until November or December. Price increases, however, usually are not marked until after June.

Low point in butter prices which generally comes in June, most likely will be under both the 1936 and 1937 levels. Production probably will continue considerably above the 1937 level during the summer.

Florida orange season is drawing to a close and California will be practically the sole orange shipping State after early June. The Valencia or summer orange crop in California is almost 60 percent larger than last year's freeze damaged crop. The seasonal price advance which usually occurs through October probably will be smaller than usual. Retail prices have been about a third under a year ago.

Apple and Florida grapefruit seasons are drawing to a close. Relatively large apple supplies remain to be marketed before the new crop matures this summer and it appears that prices won't change much from their present low levels. Texas grapefruit shipping season has ended and Florida is the major source of current marketings.

Green corn shipments are relatively light with supplies coming from Texas and Florida. Shipments usually increase in late May and June and are heaviest in July and August and September. Relatively large tomato shipments for this period of the year are expected to continue during the remainder of the month. Spring lettuce marketings from California probably will reach their peak the latter part of the month.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 14

U. S. Department of Agriculture

June 1, 1938.

Season for honeydew and honeyball melons, figs, and apricots opens in June. Marketings in June of cherries, blackberries, and potatoes are larger than during any other month. Shipments of cucumbers, lettuce, and tomatoes are heaviest in June and July. Supplies of cantaloups, watermelons, peaches, plums, and most vegetables ordinarily increase sharply during June.

Prices of a number of important food items usually go down in June. Butter prices ordinarily slide off to their low point for the year. Poultry prices turn downward as young chickens from the current year's hatch move to market in volume. Fresh pork prices often ease off a little. Prices of most food items this June probably will remain under a year ago.

Marked increase in cantaloup supplies is in prospect this month as movement from California gets fully under way. During this period, California is the principal source of shipments. Under California law only vine-ripened cantaloups which are fully matured and contain the minimum sugar content required can be shipped out of the State. Shipments this year are being regulated under an A. A. A. marketing agreement which provides for a restriction on marketings of small size cantaloups whenever prices to growers are too low, or shipments too heavy. Cantaloup prices are expected to decline until they hit bottom in August.

Georgia peaches are moving to market about 3 weeks earlier than usual. Bulk of fresh peach supplies in June comes from this area. The Georgia Association of Peach Growers is marketing its peaches as "Beautirized" this year. Only peaches grading U. S. Number 1 which have been brushed and properly sized will be sold under this label. The Georgia crop appears to be almost double last year's small supplies, and prices probably will be lower.

Watermelon shipments from the southeastern States prior to June 20, will be limited to U. S. #1 melons. Marketings from this area are regulated under an A. A. A. marketing agreement. Most melons shipped during the first half of June come from Florida, while Georgia is the major shipping State during the latter part of the month. The Florida crop is slightly larger than a year ago.

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Peaches--Georgia crop up 100%; production in 10 southern States up substantially; marked decrease in California crop. The California crop is used principally for canning and drying while the southern States, principally Georgia, furnish most of the eating peaches. Peak movement of southern peaches comes in July, but heaviest movement from all areas often is not reached until August.

Pears--Only a slight increase but the largest crop on record. About 70% of production is in California, Oregon and Washington. Season begins in July and reaches its peak in September.

Dried prunes--Slightly larger and a record size crop.

Apples--Much smaller crop. Shipments of the earliest apples from the new crop commence in June and movement of all varieties is heaviest in October.

Spring lamb and better grade beef supplies this summer most likely will be much larger than in 1937, but pork supplies may show little change. Prices of all meats probably will remain under a year ago. Beef and pork prices usually advance during the summer, but the increase this year may be relatively small. Lamb prices ordinarily hit their peak in June or July, but they may turn down a little earlier this year. There is little prospect of a repetition of the sharp increase in prices of all meats which occurred late last summer and fall.

Butter prices appear to be close to their low point for the season. Prices this summer most likely will be the lowest since the summer of 1935. Favorable pasture conditions point to the continuation of production substantially above last summer. Heavy production during recent months has resulted in a large movement into cold storage. Storage butter is used in the winter when production is low.

Seasonal increases in cantaloup and watermelon marketings are in prospect for the last half of June. Watermelons are cheapest in July while cantaloup prices are lowest in August. California is the present major source of cantaloups, and the bulk of watermelon shipments is coming from Florida. First Georgia melons reached markets in early June and this area soon will be the major source of supply.

Egg prices most likely will move up above their 1937 level but poultry prices probably will be lower than a year ago. Poultry prices usually decline during the remainder of the year while egg prices go up through November.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D.C.

LM  
Volume II, No. 16.

July 1, 1938.

Watermelon supplies during July may be slightly larger than a year ago. Prices, however, may not differ much from last July. The crop in Georgia, the leading melon producing State, is about the same as in 1937 but melons are maturing about 2 weeks earlier. No melons grading under U. S. No. 1 will be permitted to be shipped out of the southeastern melon producing areas because of a regulation issued under the Watermelon Marketing Agreement.

Larger cantaloup supplies than in 1937 are in prospect during July. Prices are expected to move down seasonally as supplies increase. California and Arizona continue to ship cantaloups during July but supplies also come from southern and mid-western States. The latter shipments move to market principally by truck and are not subject to the same strict grade and maturity standards as western cantaloups.

While total peach production is expected to be smaller than a year ago a sharp increase is in prospect from the southern States, which supply most eating peaches. Heaviest shipments of Georgia peaches, the leading producing State in the South, come in July. Production in California, which ordinarily is used principally for drying and canning, is smaller than a year ago but in view of last year's pack a larger than usual proportion of the California crop will be available for sale as fresh peaches. Due to the large southern crop, peach prices in July probably will continue under their 1937 level.

First apple and grape shipments from the 1938 crops moved to markets in mid-June. Larger supplies are expected this month but heaviest movement does not come until October. A smaller apple crop, but a larger grape crop are in prospect for 1938.

Most summer vegetable harvests are expected to be bigger than a year ago. Major exceptions are onions, green peppers and potatoes.

Potato production in States shipping in early July probably will be slightly less than a year ago. Wholesale potato prices have moved up above their relatively low level of last year. Unless the crop of potatoes in the late-producing States is larger than now in prospect, prices probably will go down less than usual during the next few months, and remain higher than in 1937.

Lemons and limes, good thirst quenchers during summer months, probably will be plentiful at prices lower than a year ago. Prices of these fruits

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usually follow the thermometer during the summer. California practically is the sole source of domestic lemons, while domestic limes come almost exclusively from Florida. This year's record Florida lime crop is over double a year ago, and lemon production is about a tenth larger.

Bulk of current orange shipments consists of California Valencia or summer oranges. The Florida season usually closes in early July leaving California as the principal source of supply until the new orange crop is available in the fall. Orange prices are expected to continue lower than a year ago and to advance less than usual from now to October because of the large crop of California Valencias.

Poultry prices probably will decline more than usual during the last half of the year, and are expected to dip below their 1937 level. Prices usually hit bottom in December. Chicken hatchings have been much larger than during the first half of 1937, making more poultry available. The extent of increase in supplies over a year ago will depend upon the number of chickens retained for egg production. Fowls, poultry over a year old, comprise the bulk of marketings during July. Chicken marketings exceed fowl marketings only from September through November.

Meat price situation remains unchanged. Slight price advances are in prospect for pork and better grade beef this summer, but lower prices are expected in the lower grade beef cuts.

Production of green peas used for canning and quick freezing is expected to be about a tenth less than a year ago, but considerably above average. Production estimates for other canning crops are not available yet. But acreage planted to sweet corn and tomatoes is much less than last year, while a slight increase is in prospect for snap beans.

Seasonal low point in butter prices appears to have been reached. Prices ordinarily go up during the last half of the year, but changes during July are small. With heavy production expected this summer, the July price increase may be less than usual.



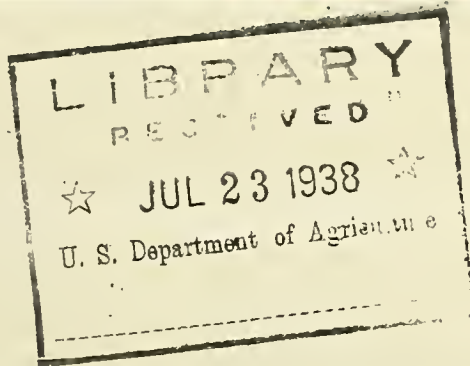
# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 17

July 15, 1938



Outlook for food supplies and prices during the last half of 1938, compared with 1937, is quite favorable for consumers. It appears that food costs in general will continue under their level of a year ago. Larger amounts of poultry, butter, sweetpotatoes, pears, rice, dried prunes, canned snap beans, canned peas, and wheat are in prospect. Substantial increase in hog slaughter is in prospect after the marketing year opens in October. Partly offsetting these larger supplies will be expected smaller amounts of apples, grapes, eggs, potatoes, almonds, walnuts, canned corn, canned tomatoes, and most canned fruits. Supplies of most quick frozen fruits and vegetables probably will be larger. In all these estimates allowance has been made, where necessary, for stocks carried over from the season just ended.

Only food item which seems likely to hit relatively high levels during the period is eggs. A year ago meat prices skyrocketed, but there is little probability of a repetition in 1938.

Decrease in potato production from 1937 levels appears to be less than previously expected and it now seems likely that prices will register their usual decline in the second half of the year. Low point in eastern markets generally comes in August, while in the West the bottom ordinarily is reached in September or October. During the remainder of 1938, supplies are expected to be only slightly smaller than a year earlier and prices may not differ much from last year's low level. However, the late potato crop is still unharvested, and if growing conditions should turn unfavorable during the remainder of the season the present estimates would need to be revised.

Egg prices are expected to go up more than usual until they reach their peak in November or December. Prices also probably will be above last year's. Primarily as the result of extensive liquidation of poultry in 1936 and early 1937, and of a small hatch in 1937, farm flocks on July 1 were at record low levels. Consequently, it appears that this fall and early winter fresh egg supplies will be smaller than a year ago. Storage holdings, which supplement fresh supplies during this period also were at record low levels on July 1. These two factors point to smaller total supplies and higher prices than in 1937.

Chickens, however, probably will be relatively cheap this fall and winter despite high egg prices. Hatchings during the first half of the year, which are the major source of poultry marketings during this year, were considerably larger than in 1937. Unusually large numbers of chicks and chickens were reported on farms on July 1.

Apple production in 1938 probably will be about a third under the 1937 bumper crop. Prices may be only slightly higher than they were during the season just ended, because a good part of the price boosting effect of a shorter crop probably will be offset by lower consumer incomes during the ensuing marketing season.

Almond and walnut crops are expected to be much smaller than the large crops harvested in 1937. Both crops are about average size, but almond production most likely will be 40% smaller, while a decrease of one-third is in prospect for California walnuts.

Wheat production this year may exceed all previous records except 1915 and flour prices may dip some more. Retail flour prices have dropped about one cent a pound from their peak level a year ago. Bread prices, however, have remained practically unchanged at the relatively high level reached last June. Effect of lower ingredient costs is being reflected in lower bread prices in a few cities. In late June, chain store bakers initiated a reduction of 2 cents a pound in Milwaukee. This may be the first in a series of nationwide bread price reductions, in view of the unusually wide margin now prevailing between wholesale prices of ingredients and U.S. average retail white bread prices.

Watermelon shipments taper off after reaching their peak in July, and the season is about over in August. Maturity is the major factor in determining quality melons. Best way to test ripeness is to plug the melon. Another test is to thump the melon. A dull hollow sound indicates that the melon is ripe, while it is immature if there is a ringing sound. The latter test fails to disclose over-ripeness or white heart -- a hard white streak running lengthwise through the melon -- both of which are shown by the cutting test. Large melons have more heart or flesh free from seed than small melons. Only melons grading at least U.S. Number One are being shipped from the southeastern States, the leading source of supplies in July.

Further moderate increases in meat prices in general appear probable in July, but prices are expected to continue lower than in 1937. Lamb prices, however, may turn down and start the usual decline which occurs when marketings of grass-fed lambs increase seasonally. Pork and better-grade beef prices generally advance during the summer months. In mid-June retail meat prices reached a new high for 1938, but were about 5 percent less than a year ago.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D.C.

Volume II, No. 18

August 1, 1938

Lowest prices for sweet corn and cantaloupes generally come in August when shipments are heaviest and supplies move to market mainly by motor truck. Peak marketings of nectarines, okra, eggplant and avocados also occur in August. Apples, grapes and pears are more plentiful than in July, but apricots, berries, watermelons, and cherries approach the end of their marketing seasons. Peach shipments also start tapering off after early August.

Prices of pork, oranges, butter, and eggs generally go up during August but those of lamb, potatoes, sweetpotatoes, and poultry usually move down. Beef prices ordinarily hit their season's high point in July or August and then move down. This August it appears that orange and butter prices will go up less than usual, while egg prices may advance more than usual. A greater than usual price decline is in prospect for poultry, principally young chickens. Eggs appear to be the only item in the above group that will be higher in price than last August.

Sweet corn production in New Jersey, the only commercial producing area for which official production data are available, is expected to be about the same as a year ago.

Cantaloupes supplies during the remainder of the summer probably will be slightly larger than a year ago. During the first half of August shipments come principally from Delaware, Maryland and Indiana.

Lamb supplies probably will be much larger during the 1938-1939 season in view of a record size lamb crop. From August through November the bulk of lamb marketings consist of grass-fed lambs. Only the lambs in this group which are in the best condition are slaughtered, and the remainder are kept for fattening on grain and other feeds, and then marketed as fed lambs after November. During the next few months the extent of the increase in supply over a year ago thus will depend on the number retained for feeding purposes. Retail lamb prices generally move down during the last five months of the year.

Supplies of canned snap beans and green peas may reach new high levels this year. Production of snap beans for canning is

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expected to be about one-seventh larger than a year ago, while an increase of about one-twentieth is in prospect for green peas. Stocks of both vegetables remaining from the season just ended are below previous high records, but still are relatively large.

Potato prices in eastern markets generally are lowest in August, while in western markets the seasonal low point ordinarily comes in October or November. Prices have dropped sharply, partly as the result of reports of a larger than anticipated crop in the late potato producing States. The late crop, which is the principal source of potato supplies from September through April, is expected to be slightly smaller than last year's large crop, but above average.

Dried bean supplies during the marketing year ending in mid-1939 probably will be about as large as the record supplies of the past season. The effect of a slightly smaller crop is expected to be offset by a bigger carryover than a year ago.

Canned grapefruit juice supplies are large and prices are relatively low. Big grapefruit crops of the past few seasons have resulted in a marked increase in the quantities canned as fruit and juice. Fresh grapefruit supplies during August usually are very small, with shipments coming from Cuba, Puerto Rico and California. First grapefruit from the 1938-1939 crop are expected in September with heavy movement starting in October.

Retail butter prices are relatively low for this period of the year. In late July 92 score butter was retailing in New York at 31.5 cents a pound, or 6 cents a pound less than a year ago. Since the first of the year the price of butter has dropped 9 cents a pound.

Sweetpotatoes from the 1938 crop are beginning to move to market and prices are expected to continue downward until they hit bottom in October. The current crop is about a tenth larger than a year ago and the third largest on record.

Wholesale prices of fowl at New York in late July were about the same as a year ago but chicken prices were from 2 1/2 to 5 cents a pound lower. Sharpest reductions were in 2 and 3 pound chickens.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 19

August 15, 1938

Meat prices appear to be at or close to their peak level for 1938. Ordinarily meat prices in general are highest in August or September. Lamb prices usually turn down in early August and are followed by falling beef prices later in the month. Downswing in pork generally doesn't get under way until late September. This year the decline in pork may start earlier. Largest meat price declines usually occur during the last 3 months of the year, and the low point in lamb prices usually comes in December; in pork and beef prices, February.

Lamb, pork, and better grade beef are expected to be <sup>more</sup> plentiful than a year ago during the remainder of 1938. Total <sup>beef</sup> beef supplies, however, probably will be about the same as in 1937, in view of expected smaller supplies of lower grade cattle. Increase in pork supplies over a year ago is not expected until after mid-September.

Shipments of vegetables now are beginning to come from the late producing States, areas which furnish the last crops of the season. These States produce about one-third of annual celery requirements, about one-half of annual fresh cabbage supplies, and almost three-fourths of annual commercial production of potatoes and onions. Consequently, prices of these four vegetables are lowest in October or November, when the harvest reaches its peak, and then go up in the late winter and early spring months when supplies come from storage holdings. Cabbage and onion production in the late States probably will be much larger than a year earlier, but a slightly smaller potato crop is in prospect.

More cantaloups than a year earlier, but less watermelons are in prospect during the remainder of the melon season. Watermelon season generally ends in September but cantaloups are available through October.

Green peas and cauliflower shipped from Colorado this month must grade U. S. No. 1 or better. This is required by regulations issued under the AAA marketing agreement for Colorado vegetables. Best peas are bright green, and fresh in appearance, and the pods are somewhat velvety to the touch. Fine cauliflower is white or creamy white, heavy and compact, with fresh green outer leaves. Size of the cauliflower head and the number of leaves left on the head have no relation to grade.

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Eggplant production in New Jersey, which is the principal source of supply in the East until late October, is about a fifth smaller than a year ago. Heavy firm eggplants of a uniform dark color, free from blemish, are the most desirable. Wilted, shriveled or soft plants often are bitter and of poor flavor.

Large cucumber crops are expected in Michigan and New York, the major source of commercial supplies until October. For slicing purposes, cucumbers should be fresh, firm, bright, and well shaped. Overmature cucumbers, however, can be used for certain kinds of pickles.

Garlic production is expected to be slightly smaller than a year ago. Bulk of commercial production comes from California. Most desirable garlic is dry and not soft or spongy, and has an unbroken outer skin.

Poultry marketings have increased sharply and wholesale prices of fresh <sup>po</sup>ressed chickens have dropped to relatively low levels. Chickens appear to be a much better buy than fowls at present. On August 8, 3-pound chickens (fryers) were wholesaling in New York at 10 cents a pound less than in 1937, while 4-pound roasting chickens were about 5 cents a pound lower. Trade reports indicate that recent declines in wholesale prices have not resulted in similar reductions in retail prices.

Butter production during the remainder of 1938 probably will continue larger than in 1937. On August 1, milk production reached a new high level for this time of the year. Wholesale butter prices remained practically unchanged during the first half of August and it still appears that prices will go up much less than usual during the first half of the year.

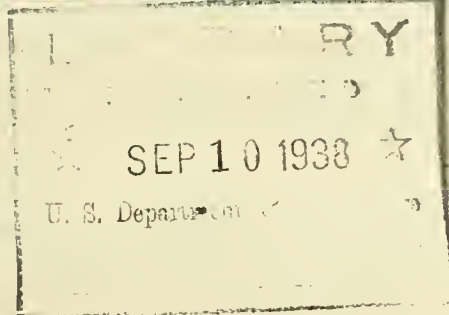
Supplies of canned corn during the 1938-39 season probably will be slightly smaller than the unusually large supplies of the season just ended. A larger reduction from a year ago is in prospect for canned tomatoes. Production of both corn and tomatoes for canning is about a fifth smaller than in 1937. However, the increase in the carryover of canned corn from the season just ended is much larger than in the case of canned tomatoes.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.



Volume II, No. 20

September 1, 1938

Pears, figs, fresh prunes and plums, and green peppers are more plentiful in September than in any other month. September also marks the opening of the season for brussels sprouts, cranberries, and Florida grapefruit. Marketings of cabbage, onions, potatoes, and celery from the late producing States, and of apples and grapes also increase sharply. But shipments of melons, green corn, and peaches usually trend downward.

Butter prices remained practically unchanged during August and it looks like the seasonal price increase which generally occurs during the last half of the year will be much smaller than usual. Since early June, when the seasonal low point in prices was reached, the retail price of butter at New York has gone up only 2 cents a pound, and during the last week of August butter was 8 cents a pound less than a year earlier. Storage holdings of butter, which are an important source of supply in the fall and winter months when milk and butter production decreases seasonally, are about 50 percent larger than a year ago, and the largest on record.

American cheese cold storage holdings likewise are the largest of record. On August 1, American cheese storage stores were 15 percent more than a year ago, while swiss cheese holdings were about the same as last year.

Roasting chickens from this year's hatch are expected to start moving to market this month and to increase in volume during the remainder of the year. Poultry under a year old and weighing over 3 1/2 pounds usually are classified as roasters. Birds under 2 1/2 pounds are called broilers, while 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 pound chickens fall in the fryer classification. In comparing prices of different classes of chickens, consumers should consider that the edible meat obtained from a broiler represents 56 to 60 percent of the dressed weight compared to a yield of 63 to 67 percent for fryers, and 62 to 64 percent for roasters. Government grades under which poultry are sold are U. S. Prime (Grade A), U. S. Choice. (Grade B), and U. S. Commercial (Grade C). Chicken prices usually decline during the last half of the year, and reach their low point in December.

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Egg situation remains unchanged and it still appears that the price advance through November, the high point for the year, will be larger than usual. Stocks of eggs in storage, which are an important source of supply during the remainder of the year, are the lowest on record. This situation coupled with the prospects during the remainder of the year for fresh egg production smaller than in 1937, point to a continuation of retail egg prices higher than a year earlier.

Pear crop this year is slightly larger than last year's record production and lower prices are in prospect for this season. The Pacific Coast states produce the bulk of annual pear requirements. Usually pears are picked when immature and are ripened in cool, dark rooms at markets. Good quality pears are fairly firm, but not hard, free from blemish, clean, and not misshapen. Consumers should not rely solely on color as a complete test for maturity since some varieties may be yellow but still immature, while other varieties are in prime condition when green or greenish yellow.

Apple production is expected to be about a third smaller than the large 1937 crop, but a lower level of consumer incomes probably will offset much of the price boosting effect of a smaller crop. Best apples for desert purposes are those medium in size and of a good color. For general cooking purposes, tart or slightly acid fruit is desirable. Varieties like Rome Beauty, and Rhode Island Greenings are excellent for baking. Best sizes for baking are those packed 96 or less per box, while apples packed 113 to 138 per box or measuring 2 1/2 to 2 3/4 inches in diameter are the most desirable for general use. Grade, variety and count are marked on the apple box. Western boxed apples are graded either as Extra Fancy, Fancy, or C Grade, while most apples from areas east of the Rockies are sold under the U. S. Grades.

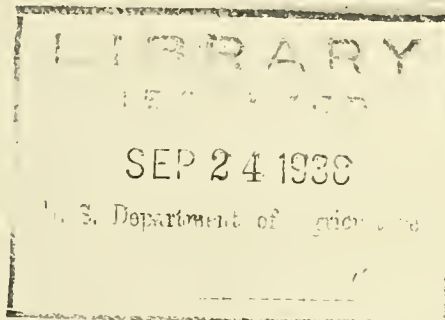
Grape production is indicated to be slightly smaller than last year and prices to date have been lower. About 90 percent of annual grape supplies come from California. Bulk of early shipments consist of the seedless varieties. Table grapes, to be of good quality, should have a general appearance of freshness. Individual berries should be plump and firmly attached to the stem. Color is the best guide to sugar content and flavor. White or green grapes usually are at their peak for flavor and sweetness when they are turning to an amber color. A few small, sunburned, wrinkled, or unripened berries on a bunch do not affect the quality or flavor of the bunch as a whole.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.



Volume ~~I~~ No. 21  
II

September 15, 1938

Meat supplies during the rest of 1938 probably will increase seasonally and be larger than a year ago. A price decline usually accompanies the seasonal increase in supplies. In view of larger supplies and smaller consumer incomes meat most likely will continue to be cheaper than in 1937. Meat prices reached an unusually high level during the early fall of 1937 but after mid-September prices tumbled sharply. A smaller decline is in prospect this year.

Cranberry supplies most likely will be much smaller than in 1937. The 1938 crop is expected to be 40 percent less than last year's bumper crop, but only slightly under average size. Production in Oregon and Washington is expected to be about the same as in 1937, but these two states produce only 3 to 4 percent of the total crop. About 70 percent of annual supplies come from Massachusetts. Cranberry shipments are heaviest in November. Good quality cranberries have a fresh plump appearance, a high luster, and are firm. Poor quality berries are shrivelled, have a dull appearance and are soft.

Most of the vegetable crops in the late producing States, areas which furnish the bulk of supplies during the last third of the year, are expected to be larger than a year ago. These late crops are harvested by the end of October or early November, but they are available for marketing through most of the winter months since parts of the crops are placed in storage. Marked increases in supply over 1937 are in prospect for cabbage and celery, and slight increases for onions and carrots. Potato production, however, appears to be slightly smaller than a year earlier. Retail prices of most vegetables have been lower than a year ago.

(Over)

Potato prices appear to be close to their seasonal low point. Ordinarily low point in eastern markets comes in September, and in western markets in October or November. Prices then rise gradually during the winter months as supplies move out of storage. Consumers will find U. S. Government grades which are stamped on the potato sacks a good guide in selecting quality potatoes. Government grades for potatoes are U. S. #1, U. S. Commercial, & U. S. #2.

Shipments of grapes, apples and pears, are increasing seasonally and prices have been easing off. Pear marketings appear to be close to their peak for the season, which ordinarily comes in September, but heaviest movement of apples and grapes is not expected until October. Low prices received by growers for grapes have caused California shippers to suspend all shipping operations on several week-ends in an attempt to bolster the market.

First Florida grapefruit of the season reached markets in late August and first Texas grapefruit are expected the latter half of this month. Supplies are expected to increase seasonally through the rest of the year. Production estimates on grapefruit are not available but on the basis of the condition of the crop it appears that there will be more grapefruit than last year. In selecting grapefruit weight is an important factor as an index to the quantity of juice. Good quality grapefruit are firm, springy to the touch, and heavy for their size. Thin skinned fruits which are heavy for their size, generally have more juice than coarse skinned or puffy fruit. Most of the skin defects in grapefruit -- such as discoloration, thorn scratches--affect appearance and not quality. Despite common belief, russet grapefruit, those with a reddish brown skin discoloration, are not of better quality than grapefruit of a yellow color.

Stable prices during the first half of September again were the outstanding feature in the butter market. Ordinarily butter prices advance during the fall and winter until they reach their peak in December. This year relatively heavy milk production coupled with butter purchases made by the Dairy Products Marketing Association and the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation have resulted in a heavy movement of butter into cold storage. On September 1 cold storage stocks were around 50 percent larger than a year ago, when they were about average. Heavy storage holdings, together with the prospect of heavy milk production during the remainder of 1938, indicate that any price increase during this period probably will be smaller than usual.

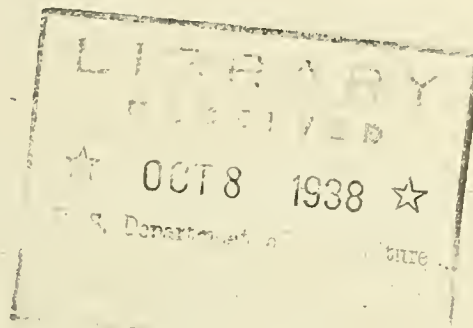


# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

122Cm  
Volume II, No. 22



October 1, 1938

Apples and grapes ordinarily are most plentiful and cheapest in October. Supplies of both fruits this year are smaller than in 1937, particularly apples. Nevertheless, grapes have been much cheaper, and apple prices haven't been much different than a year earlier. A lower level of consumer incomes has offset much of the price boosting effect of smaller crops. Part of the apple crop is placed in storage, and consequently prices move up from October until the new crop is available in the following summer.

California Valencia orange season is drawing to a close with prices still at relatively low levels. First Florida oranges of the 1938-1939 season reached markets in late September and seasonal increases in supply from this area are expected the remainder of the year. Texas oranges will soon start moving, and California Navel oranges are expected in early November. Production estimates for the 1938-1939 orange crop are not available as yet, but on the basis of the present condition of the crop it looks like oranges will be plentiful again in 1938-1939.

Supplies of most of the vegetables which are harvested in the fall in the late producing States and stored for winter marketing are expected to be larger than in 1937. The 1938 late cabbage crop is of record size and over 50 percent bigger than 1937 production. About half of the late cabbage crop is used in commercial kraut production. Carrot, celery, and onion production also are expected to be larger than in 1937, but a smaller potato crop is in prospect. Prices of practically all of these staple vegetables have been lower than a year ago because of larger supplies. Low point in prices for these items generally comes in October or November when the harvest reaches its peak. Prices then usually move up slowly until the following spring.

(over)

Smaller egg supplies than in 1937, both fresh and storage, have been the major factors behind the advance of egg prices over their level of a year ago. Generally, egg prices go up until they hit their peak in November. But this year, due to small supplies, the advance to date has been marked, particularly in top quality eggs. This rate of advance has been checked somewhat by consumer resistance to higher prices. The outlook for the remainder of 1938 is for egg supplies smaller than a year ago. There is some possibility, however, that during the winter, when pullets from this spring's large hatch start laying, fresh egg production may constitute a larger than usual proportion of total supplies. Such a condition would offset part of the price boosting effect of the record small storage holdings.

Pork is going to be much more plentiful during the coming hog marketing year (October 1, 1938 to September 30, 1939) than in the season just ended. Usually fresh pork prices are highest in September and lowest in February. Prices generally move down between these two months as marketings increase. Part of the pork processed during this heavy period of slaughter is placed in storage for use in months of smaller slaughter.

Turkey supplies are expected to be larger than last year, but not as plentiful as the big crop of 1936. Earlier marketings also are in prospect. Farmers have indicated that they expect to sell more than their usual number in October or earlier and less than the usual proportion of their crop in December. November marketing probably will be about the same proportion of the total crop as a year earlier. Consumers probably will find turkeys a little heavier in weight than in 1937.

Relatively large chicken supplies from this spring's hatch have pushed prices sharply below their 1937 level. Prices of fowl, poultry over a year old, have not been much different than a year ago, because farmers are retaining as many as possible of their laying hens. Outlook is for chicken supplies to continue much larger than in 1937 during the remainder of the year. Poultry prices generally decline during the last half of the year until they hit bottom in December. The larger than usual decline to date has been due to relatively large supplies.

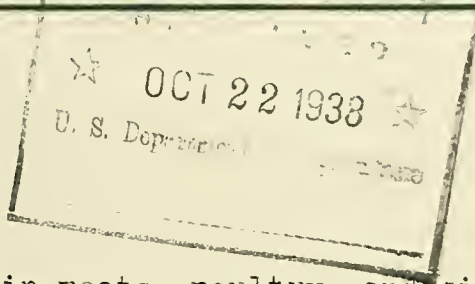


# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume II, No. 23



October 15, 1938

Price trend in meats, poultry, and citrus fruits generally is downward during the last 2 1/2 months of the year. Usually butter prices go up through December and the upswing in egg prices lasts through November. Apple and grape prices ordinarily move up after hitting their seasonal low point in October. Cabbage, celery, onions, and potatoes also go up in price after October or November.

Average retail price of white bread in the U. S. has dropped to its lowest level since early 1937 as the result of reductions in 20 of the 51 cities which report food costs to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Major price changes were limited to eastern cities. The margin between the replacement cost of the ingredients in a typical pound loaf of white bread and the average retail price remains relatively wide, and it appears highly probable that price reductions may occur in other cities.

Record grapefruit supplies are in the offing for 1938-39. The crop of 40.7 million boxes--more than one box for each family--is about a third larger than the bumper crop of the season just ended. Grapefruit season opens in September, and shipments are relatively heavy from October through May. The recent upward trend in production has increased the length of the marketing season, and smoothed out price fluctuations. About one-half of the crop comes from Florida, and most of the remainder from Texas.

Grapefruit can be purchased either with or without seeds. Pink fleshed grapefruit--grown largely in Texas but also produced in Florida--differs principally in color. The number marked on the side of the grapefruit box indicates the number in the box. Good quality grapefruit are heavy, firm yet springy to the touch and thin skinned. Most blemishes found on fruit are minor, and do not affect its eating quality. Grapefruit should be stored in a cool dry place. Texas producers are shipping only grapefruit grading U.S. #2 or better this year. In Florida, standard for mature grapefruit (sugar and juice content) has been raised again this year.

(over)

Orange supplies available from late October through the spring months are expected to be about a tenth larger than the record size supplies of 1937-38. During this period about one-third of supplies consist of California Navels, while all varieties of Florida oranges comprise about 60% of the total supply. Orange prices usually reach their peak around October and then decline through about February. Current prices have been relatively low largely because of the large 1937-38 crop. A low price level generally results in a smaller than usual seasonal decline.

Tangerines, small oranges with puffy skins that shed easily, are expected to start moving to markets late this month. Their season generally runs from October through March, with heaviest shipments in late November and December. Practically all domestic supplies come from Florida where a crop about a fourth bigger than a year earlier, and only slightly under the 1936 record crop is in prospect.

Total supplies of canned vegetables for the 1938-39 season probably will be only slightly smaller than supplies in the season just ended. Sharply smaller supplies of tomatoes and tomato products, asparagus and spinach more than offset increases in other items. Canned pea supplies are of record size, and canners have formed a Canned Pea Marketing Cooperative to stabilize marketings and to stimulate consumption.

Cranberry crop prospects declined slightly in September as a result of unfavorable weather. Production now is expected to be only about half of last year's 877 thousand barrel bumper crop, and the smallest since 1918, except for the drought year 1934.

Fresh egg production has bounced back up to its 1937 level. Stocks of storage eggs, however, remain considerably smaller than a year earlier. Since the latter are an important source of supply during the latter part of the year, eggs probably will be less plentiful than in 1937. Egg outlook for 1939 is more favorable from the supply standpoint, since larger supplies are in prospect than in 1938.

Milk production continues at relatively high levels, a factor which has been largely responsible for the low price level of manufactured dairy products this year. On October 1, more milk was available per person than in any other October. Outlook is for milk production to continue higher than in 1937.

Record crop of cabbage in prospect indicates that cabbage will be plentiful during the remainder of 1938. Large increases over a year ago are reported in supplies of cabbage generally used for commercial kraut production as well as of cabbage for marketing in fresh form.



# CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D.C.

1226-14  
Volume II, No. 24

NOV 12 1938

U. S. Department of Agriculture

November 1, 1938

Turkeys, cranberries, casaba melons and persimmons usually are most plentiful and lowest in price in November. Mushrooms, parsnips, turnips, rutabagas, sweet potatoes, celery, onions, cabbage and potatoes generally sell at close to their seasonal low point. November also marks the period of heaviest marketings of cauliflower from Long Island, New York.

Marketings of fruits except citrus decrease seasonally after October. Prices of practically all fruits have been relatively low this year. Apples, for example, are retailing at close to their low level of a year ago, in spite of a crop one-third smaller than in 1937.

Source of green vegetable supplies shifts to the Southeastern and Far-Western States in November. These areas produce most of the highly perishable vegetables during the winter months. However, winter supplies of the more hardy vegetables, celery, potatoes, onions, sweet potatoes, and cabbage come from Northern States. Harvesting of these latter crops usually is completed in November but part of the crop is placed in storage for shipment through the winter and early spring months. Vegetable prices generally go up during the early winter as supplies decrease seasonally, and move relatively long distances to reach market. Sometimes freezes during the winter growing period result in temporary sharp price increases. Relatively large supplies of most vegetables are in prospect from the areas producing the first crops of fall and winter vegetables.

Meat supplies generally increase seasonally during the last two months of the year. Sharpest increase ordinarily occurs in fresh pork. Better grade beef supplies also increase materially and the general quality of beef available improves as cattle fed on grain for relatively long periods of time reach slaughterhouses. Poultry marketings increase and reach a peak in December. During November the bulk of lamb marketings consist of grass-fed lambs but in December supplies consist of grain-fed lambs.

(Over)

Casabas are late melons, almost globular in shape, yellow, with a rough and wrinkled outside. Ripe casabas have a soft, creamy white, sweet, and juicy flesh. Ripeness can be detected by the yellowness of the rind, and a softening at the blossom end of the melon. Casabas usually are ripened after being picked.

Persimmons come to market only during the fall months. They are shaped somewhat like an egg and have a smooth skin like a plum. Ripe persimmons have a rich golden color and are soft but not mushy. They can be ripened at home very easily. While many people prefer to eat persimmons raw like other fruits, they also are used in cottage puddings, custards, and pies.

Earlier marketings and larger supplies have been two important factors behind lower turkey prices this year compared with 1937. In late October dressed turkey was retailing at 35 cents a pound in New York, about 6 cents under the 1937 level.

Record size crops of winter oranges and grapefruit have resulted in relatively low prices at the opening of the 1938-39 season. Both Florida and Texas are now shipping grapefruit and seasonal increases in supply are in prospect during the remainder of the year. These two areas are also shipping 1938-39 crop oranges, and first California navels or winter oranges are expected this month. Bulk of current orange supplies still consist of California valencias or summer oranges, but valencia shipments are beginning to decrease and the season probably will end after the middle of the month.

Cranberry prices have been considerably above their low level of 1937. The supply situation is just the reverse of a year ago. In 1937 production reached a new high point. Current production is only about half as big as a year ago, and well below levels of most other recent years.

Butter and egg situation shows little change from mid-October. Butter supplies still are expected to be much larger than in 1937, whereas a considerable reduction in egg supplies is in prospect. Peak in egg prices ordinarily is reached in November, and high point in butter comes in December. While egg prices have registered more than their usual seasonal increase to date, butter prices have gone up less than usual.





